

DDD Member Update

Division of Developmental Disabilities
Member Newsletter



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Equal Opportunity Employer/Program

Under Titles VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VI & VII), and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, and Title II of the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act (GINA) of 2008; the Department prohibits discrimination in admissions, programs, services, activities, or employment based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, genetics and retaliation.

The Department must make a reasonable accommodation to allow a person with a disability to take part in a program, service or activity. For example, this means if necessary, the Department must provide sign language interpreters for people who are deaf, a wheelchair accessible location, or enlarged print materials. It also means that the Department will take any other reasonable action that allows you to take part in and understand a program or activity, including making reasonable changes to an activity.

If you believe that you will not be able to understand or take part in a program or activity because of your disability, please let us know of your disability needs in advance if at all possible. To request this document in alternative format or for further information about this policy, contact the Division of Developmental Disabilities ADA Coordinator at 602-542-0419; TTY/TDD Services: 7-1-1. Free language assistance for DES services is available upon request. Ayuda gratuita con traducciones relacionadas con los servicios del DES está disponible a solicitud del cliente.

Medical Director's Column

By Dr. Robert Klaehn

Let's talk about how hard it is to find the right diagnosis for a person with a developmental disability.

A person with a developmental disability may have a hard time telling someone what is going on with them. It may be hard to say something hurts. The first clue may be a change in how a person acts. For example, a person with heartburn may rub their chest. Someone with a toothache may not want to eat. Someone in pain may cry or strike out.

Most doctors (and psychiatrists, too) don't learn much about persons with Autism or other disabilities in their training.

A doctor without the needed training may say that a person is biting their hand because of their disability. The true answer could be the person has a headache. A psychiatrist may say that a person is withdrawn due to their disability. Instead, it could be the person is sad because someone they liked no longer works with them. Or the person is easily scared because of past abuse.

Blaming a person's developmental disability for behavior that is due to a medical or psychiatric condition is called "diagnostic overshadowing."

Making the right diagnosis can be hard. The team must work with the doctors to make sure all the information is provided. This helps get the right treatment and support for the person.

Flu Season is here!

This time of year it is important to think about the flu and steps to prevent it. The flu can strike as early as October, as late as May, and peak from December to March.

The flu virus is worse than the common cold; it can lead to dangerous health problems.

Preventing the flu is important. The most important step in prevention is the flu vaccine. The vaccine is available as a shot or as a nasal spray. The age range for the nasal spray is 2 to 49 years of age. Check with your doctor for proper vaccination instructions and any concerns you have related to the flu vaccine.

Proper hand washing, good health habits, and avoiding those who are already sick are some extra prevention tips. While those are great tips, they do not replace receiving the flu vaccine. The flu virus can spread a few days before signs and symptoms occur. Exposure to the flu may be unknown. Because of this, good habits (in addition to the vaccination) are the best ways to prevent the flu.



Living in a Residential Setting?

Pay less towards room and board.

In the past, people living in group homes or developmental homes paid 88% of their monthly income towards room and board. House Bill 2240 lowered that amount to 70%. That means more money is available for personal use. 30% is now available for personal use.

Ready to Quit? Make a list!

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention offers the following advice to smokers who want to quit:

1. Don't smoke any cigarettes.
2. Write down why you want to quit.
3. Know that it will take commitment and effort to quit smoking.
4. Get help if you want it.
5. Remember this good news! More than half of all adult smokers have quit, and you can, too. Millions of people have learned to face life without a cigarette. Quitting smoking is the single most important step you can take to protect your health and the health of your family.

Arizona has a free helpline that can help you quit tobacco – ASHLine: 1-800-556-6222 – www.ashline.org

Edited from http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/quit_smoking/how_to_quit/quit_tips/index.htm

Agency with Choice

Agency with Choice lets members be in charge of their own care so it is provided in the way they want and need. To help do this, members get help from the agency. Members who receive attendant care, habilitation, or homemaker services in their own home can choose Agency with Choice.

Agency with Choice uses a Partnership Agreement. The agreement is between the agency and the member. The member chooses the direct care worker. The agency and the member work together to train, manage and supervise the direct care worker.

Your support coordinator will talk with you about Agency with Choice at your next visit. You do not have to choose Agency with Choice. You can choose Agency with Choice if you would like. If you need help to be in charge of your care, you can choose someone called an "Individual Representative" to help you. You can also get training and help from the agency.



Can't Find Something on Our Website?

Call the Division at 1-866-229-5553 for help.

Had your Annual Well Visit?

If not, please call your doctor and schedule one today!

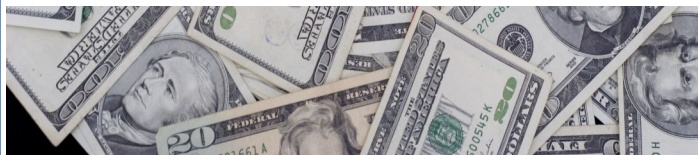
A well visit is important for many reasons. It makes sure you talk with your doctor **when you are not sick.**

The doctor will do a physical exam and discuss preventative screenings with you. Screenings identify issues earlier. Seeing your doctor when you are not sick is important. When you are healthy is the time to discuss the risks for diseases like cancer, diabetes, and heart disease.

Whether you live alone, with family, or in a group home you are eligible through your AHCCCS Health Plan. Prevent health problems and develop a plan to keep you healthy.

You are in charge of your goals to stay healthy. Live a healthier and happier life through preventive care. **Schedule your appointment!**

Busting Barriers to Employment



Did you know you can work and still keep your disability benefits? Many people worry about losing their benefits. Some worry about not having the money to pay bills. The truth is you can work.

When you are working, you may be able to keep all or part of your benefits. When working, you will likely have more money at the end of the month. Social Security allows a person to try working without losing benefits. If you are an adult getting Supplemental Security Income (SSI), not all of your work is counted against your monthly benefits.

Are you a student under age 22? You may be eligible to work and go to school. The Student Earned Income Exclusion lets students make money while going to school. You can make some money by working and it will not count as part of your income.

Some people make enough money through work for SSI checks to go down to zero but end up having more money than before. Also, most people can keep their health care through the Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System (AHCCCS). If your work income changes, you can have your SSI money re-started.

To learn more about how going to work may change your benefits, visit the Disability Benefits 101 website at <http://www.az.db101.org/>.